

WILDERNESS PLANNING

Why Two Wilderness Plans?

The Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service decided to complete two separate Wilderness plans for the three wilderness areas designated under the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act; combining the Hemingway-Boulders and White Clouds (HB/WC) Wilderness into one plan and separating out the Jim McClure-Jerry Peak (JMJP) Wilderness into a second plan.

Two factors drove this decision. First, resources and uses differ in each area. Second, this separation aligns with administrative boundaries as the legislation for these wildernesses established boundaries along the Sawtooth National Forest and Salmon-Challis National Forest lines. BLM-managed lands are included in both the White Clouds and JMJP wildernesses; therefore, the BLM will be participating in the development of both plans.

What are the differences in these wilderness areas?

The three wilderness areas have distinct differences. The landscapes, opportunities, local community values, and the amounts and types of visitor use vary from area to area. The **White Clouds Wilderness** is epitomized by its dramatic high peaks alpine lake basins attracting high levels of visitation. At the other end of the spectrum, the **Jim McClure-Jerry Peak Wilderness** encompasses open, rolling sagebrush hillsides and high elevation ridgelines, which invites large wildlife populations. Human visitation is much lower in this area. The **Hemingway-Boulders Wilderness** provides a truly wild experience for visitors due to its remoteness and thus, rarely visited landscapes.

| Hemingway-Boulders Wilderness & White Clouds Wilderness | Jim McClure-Jerry Peak Wilderness |
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| Areas administered by the Sawtooth National Forest within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and the Challis BLM | Areas administered by the Salmon-Challis National Forest and the Challis BLM |
| Sawtooth Forest Plan Revised in 2012 Wilderness Management Plan will be incorporated through a Forest Plan Amendment Contains existing direction for the Sawtooth NRA, including group size limits, campfire restrictions at lakes, etc. | Salmon-Challis Forest Plan Revision process beginning Fall 2016 Wilderness Management Plan will be incorporated into the Forest Plan Revision |
| BLM – Resource Management Plan | |
| Challis Resource Management Plan (1999) contains direction for released WSAs, and minimal direction on management of designated wilderness is provided. The Wilderness Management Plans will provide that guidance. No RMP amendment necessary for the BLM. | |

“In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), certain Federal lands... are designated as wilderness and as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System”

- Public Law 114–46
August 7, 2015





White Clouds Wilderness

Frequently Asked Questions for Hemingway-Boulders and White Clouds Wilderness Plan

Q: What is zoning and how were the zones determined?

A: Zoning is the practice of delineating areas in wilderness where different natural or social resources need varying management actions. Wilderness areas are not completely alike due to biological and social factors. In other words, not every acre is the same: some ecological areas may be more sensitive, or particular areas may be more attractive or accessible to visitors. Zoning areas allows us to work within set parameters to obtain desired conditions.

The descriptions for each zone were developed first. Zone 1 is the most pristine whereas Zone 4 is the more heavily used. Other considerations were taken as we looked at on-the-ground developments (trails, campsites, structures for livestock), popular destinations, and desired conditions. Land uses also played an important role in this zoning effort as team members considered grazing, outfitter and guide services and proximity to Highway 75. To view a detailed, interactive map of the proposed zones within each wilderness, access <http://arccg.is/28Z6RV0>.

Q: Why are campfires restrictions proposed? What is a no trace fire?

A: Campfires are proposed to be prohibited above 9,000 feet in elevation (with exceptions around certain lakes) to protect sensitive whitebark pine and to retain snags and downed trees crucial to ecosystem functions in high elevation areas. In this proposal, fires are allowed below 9,000 feet in elevation (with exceptions around certain lakes), and fires must be “no trace.” Allowing no trace fires as described would accommodate much of the on-going campfire use. A ‘no trace’ fire leaves no apparent signs (scorched vegetation and soils, or blackened earth and wood, charcoal and ashes) of the campfire occurring by using a fire pan or fire blanket.

Q: How were the group size restrictions determined?

A: The current Forest Plan direction for these areas established group size to 20 people and a combined number of pack and saddle stock to 25. The wilderness management plan proposes a limit of 12 persons in a group and 14 head of stock within wilderness to protect sensitive alpine environments where existing campsites and the absence of trails do not accommodate large groups without causing resource damage.

These group size limits are proposed to minimize impacts to wilderness character due to the sensitivity and limitations of the alpine environment.

Q: Why are limitations on recreational stock in certain lake basins proposed?

A: These limitations are proposed to protect fragile alpine soils and vegetation, including sensitive whitebark pine trees, riparian processes and aquatic biota. Additionally, in many cases, the trails accessing these areas are steep, rocky and not designed for safe passage of stock.

Q: Why are the other recreational restrictions proposed?

A: Other restrictions are proposed to protect resources as noted below.

- **Shortcutting trail switchbacks:** Reduce impacts to soil, water quality, and vegetation.
- **Tethering stock near water:** Protect water quality and riparian areas
- **Tying stock to live trees:** Minimize tree damage.
- **Recreational grazing near lakes:** Protect fragile alpine soils and vegetation, protect fish and amphibians from soil erosion and changes in water chemistry
- **Human waste requirements:** Good sanitation practices protect pristine water conditions.



Hemingway-Boulders Wilderness